CONSERVING IRRIGATED FARMLAND IN LARIMER COUNTY
### Why? Our Lands Our Future

#### Table 3-1. Land Conservation Needs Assessment Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation Needs</th>
<th>Play In To Nature Outreach</th>
<th>Master Plan Update Outreach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands to protect lakes, rivers, streams and preserve water quality</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands to protect natural resources, wildlife habitat and rare species</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands for more outdoor recreation opportunities</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands to create greenways or trail corridors that connect communities and parks</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands to preserve working farms and ranches</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve lands within our communities near neighborhoods and schools</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve community separators (open lands between cities and towns)</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve regional lands</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve historic sites or renovate historic structures</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in management and maintenance of current natural areas and facilities</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in additional paved and natural surface trails</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in additional trailheads, parking, shelters, facilities, etc.</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore and rehabilitate rivers and open lands</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire water rights for in-stream flows and wildlife habitat</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure water for agricultural lands</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide land for emerging farmers and small acreage farming</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conserve land with proximity to existing open space</td>
<td>✅</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Dark Orange = Top priority; Light Orange = Secondary Priority; White = either not a priority or the question was not repeated in this study.

*In effort not to duplicate efforts from previous studies, these surveys asked a limited number of questions to gather additional feedback. Not all questions were asked in all studies.*
Why?

Conservation Values provided by Irrigated Farms:

- Wildlife habitat
- Open space - scenic
- Community separator
- Farmland productivity – local economy
- Groundwater recharge
- Local food
- Flood surge control
Why?

- The greatest gap in conservation occurs with working farms and ranches, having 86% of the high priority areas not currently under some form of protection.
Why? – Time is of the essence

Water:
- Originally, 85% of CBT shares were owned by agriculture, now only 34% are.
- More than 72% of the 10,000 shares of North Poudre Irrigation Company stock is owned by cities and water districts.

Sales of Water:
- CBT Shares
  - Jun 2014: $18,000
  - Feb 2015: $25,000
  - July 2015: $30,000
Why? – Interruptible Supply

Irrigated farmscapes are reservoirs

They can provide water in dry years if water-sharing agreements are developed
How? – Open Lands Acquisitions

Larimer County Open Lands is exploring opportunities to:

- Tie existing water to farmland through voluntary conservation easements, either purchased or donated;
- Purchase and manage water rights for farmland irrigation on conserved properties;
- Develop water use agreements, alternative transfer mechanisms, and partnerships with private and public parties that dedicate water to farmland at least 7 out of 10 years;
Funding Sources

- GOCO – Open Space Grant
- NRCS – Farmland Protection
- CWCB – Innovation Grant & Water Supply Reserve Account
- City and Town Open Space Sales Tax
- Private Foundations
- Alternative Transfer Mechanism Water Agreement
- Conservation Buyer
Alternative Agricultural Water Transfer Methods Grants

What is the Alternative Agricultural Water Transfer Methods Grant Program?
The purpose of the Program is to assist in developing and implementing creative alternatives to the traditional purchase and transfer of agricultural water. These alternative methods could include:

- Interruptible supply agreements
- Long-term rotational fallowing
- Water banks
- Deficit/partial irrigation practices
- Alternate cropping types

Who can apply for a Grant?
Any private or public entity that can contract with the state and that can establish and document the need for the project is eligible to apply for funds.

How can the money be used?
Approved projects should provide usable and transferable information that will increase our understanding of how to successfully design transfer programs that provide a long-term, reliable water supply while sustaining meaningful agricultural production.

Examples of activities that would qualify for funding from this program include:

- Technical analysis of transferable consumptive use
- Identification and examination of administrative and legal considerations or issues related to alternative agricultural water transfers
- Technical, logistical and/or legal analysis/work to organize the institutional framework necessary to implement an alternative transfer method(s)
- Technical, logistical and/or legal analysis of water supply delivery options. This may include conceptual solutions and the feasibility of implementing the delivery of water to the new use.
- Assist in addressing potential third party concerns

How do I apply for a Grant?
Currently, the program has approximately $750,000 available for grants.